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ABSTRACT

The history, services, reading habits, and statistics are given for the Tanganyika public libraries. The conclusions of the study were that most Africans tend to read for utilitarian purposes and not for recreation or self-development, that there is little spare time for reading, the subject matter in books reflects European civilization, and more research is required to find out who reads what and why. (AB)

1

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P.N. Paper prepared for the

Third Conference

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"..... a public library should not just be a place where books can be borrowed. It must be a centre for much wider educational and cultural activity. A library should be one of the centres for adult education work of all kinds - varying from the promotion of the desire for literacy by story telling and discussion to the erudite lectures of visiting professors."

- From the speech by President Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere at the opening of the Central Library, Dar es Salaam, December 9th, 1967.

History

The establishment of a nation-wide library system was one of the projects which were given a top priority from the time Tanganyika (as it was then called) became independent in 1961.

In 1960, Mr. Sidney Hockey was appointed by the British Council as Libraries Organiser for the governments of East Africa - Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. His recommendations were that each territory should consider "the establishment of a central free public library service ..... which will integrate all existing public library services and eventually be responsible for the administration of such services for the whole country". The now famous Hockey Report thus became the genesis for the formation of the Tanganyika Library Service which later became independent of the East African Literature Bureau.

However it was not until November 1963 when the Tanganyika Library Services Board Act was established. The Act empowers the Board, which consists of ten members, "to promote, establish, equip, manage, maintain and develop libraries in Tanzania mainland." During the same year, Mr. E.M. Broome was appointed the first Director of the Tanganyika Library Service until October 1970.

Since its establishment the Board has been concerned with the distribution of books to every part of the country. This has been no small task. The Board is quite conscious of the many problems which have to be considered in planning and developing an efficient library service for all people. Tanzania is a poor country. The mainland is over 883,580 sq. kilometres with about 96% of its 12,000,000 people sparsely

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Conscious of numerous problems, some of which have just been outlined, the Board is presently giving the following services:

Urban library service

There is a National Central Library in Dar es Salaam, which is the headquarters of a nation-wide library service. It has a fully organised public reference and lending service for both adults and children, a central book processing and supply unit as well as a central advisory service. There are branch libraries in Arusha, Bukoba, Iringa, Kibaha, Korogwe, Moshi, Mwanza and Tanga. Under the current five year development plan (1969-74) it is hoped to build new libraries Morogoro, Mbeya, Tabora and Mtwara.

Rural Library Service

With the Government's emphasis on the provision of more social amenities to rural areas, the Tanganyika Library Service intends to build village libraries wherever it is feasible and to complement them with mobile libraries.

Mobile libraries

On 8th December, 1970 two Unimog Mercedes-Benz mobile libraries were presented to the Tanzania Government by the Federal Republic of Germany to be used by the Tanganyika Library Service for the expansion of its rural services programme. The Minister for National Education, the Hon. Mr. C.Y. Mgonja, M.P. received the two mobile libraries on behalf of the Tanzania Government. One mobile is stationed at Mwanza and another at Tanga. The Tanganyika Library Service has now 3 rural mobile libraries including the one at Kibaha.

Postal library service

For those people who live in places without library facilities on mainland Tanzania, they can get books by mail. The service is free in that postage for books both ways is paid for by the Tanganyika Library Service and the reader has only to pay a deposit of Shs.10/- for each book borrowed. This money is refunded to him if he ceases to use the service or if he moves to a place where there are library facilities. The Tanganyika Library Service took over the postal library service from the East African Literature Bureau which operated this service as far back as the early 1950's.

The Book Box Exchange Service

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The Book Box Exchange Service

The Tanganyika Library Service offers a collection of books on loan to villages and institutions such as community centres, prisons and clubs which do not have library facilities. Formerly there was a charge of one shilling for each book but now the service is offered free of charge. The centre is required to exchange its collection once every year and the Tanganyika Library Service pays transport charges for one exchange every year. Like the postal library service, the book box exchange service was taken over from the East African Literature Burear.

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Joint school/public libraries.

The Kibaha branch library already caters for adults and students. The Tanganyika Library Service has cooperated closely with the Ministry of National Education on the production of a satisfactory design for buildings to house libraries which can serve both the public and secondary school students. Actual plans have been agreed for libraries at Njombe (mid-1971) and Tarime (completion December 1972) and work is proceeding on the design of similar libraries at Sengerema (completion December 1971), Bagamoyo and Songea (completion December 1972).

Books for the District Education Officers (Adult Education)

In his 1970 New Year Message, President Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere declared 1970 to be Adult Education Year. In August 1970, the Tanganyika Library Service sent the first batch of 100 books, consisting mainly of Swahili and simple readers, to each of the 60 District Education Officers (Adult Education). The second batch of 150 books was despatched in February, 1971 to each of the 60 districts, making a total of 15,000 books. Further arrangements have already been made with the Ministry of National Education to supply an additional batch of 18,000 books to the 60 District Education Officers (A.E.) by May 1971, making a total of 33,000 books.

Books for the six districts

As a result of the President's New Year Message concerning the total eradication of illiteracy by 9th December, 1971 in Ukerewe, Pare, Kilimanjaro, Mafia, Masasi, and Dar es Salaam, the Tanganyika Library Service has already surveyed the Ukerewe Island and books are being distributed to the residents of the island using the Mwanza based rural library mobile. Furthermore it has re-emphasised the President's call for rural people to make use of the Book Box Exchange scheme in borrowing books and it has been decided, as pointed out earlier, to abolish the deposit of one shilling for each book . With the removal of such a deposit, which apparently appeared to be a deterrent, it is hoped that people, especially those living in ujamaa villages, will be more willing to borrow books.

READING HABITS

The Tanganyika Library Service has been, as pointed out earlier, recently established. In order to make meaningful future plans for the service the organisation is trying to find out:

(a) who are the library users?

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(a) who are the library users?
(b) how much do they use the library and for what purpose?
(c) what do they read?
(d) what influences their choice of books?

These are the questions which Mr. F.M. Gardner, an eminent British librarian, recommended for investigation to an Unesco team which was appointed to survey and assess the Delhi Public Library in 1955. The questions are just as relevant to Tanzania today as they were to India 16 years ago.

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Since the Tanganyika Library Service was established in 1963 three major reader surveys have been made - the first one in 1966, the second in August 1969 and the third in November 1969. All the surveys were conducted by the Tanganyika Library Service except the third one which was carried out as part of a much wider survey of Language Use and Language Teaching in Tanzania. The third research was under the auspices of the University of East Africa together with the University of Ethiopia. Since the last survey falls out of my province I will only discuss in detail the other two.

The 1966 survey

The survey was conducted in a form of a questionnaire which was completed at random by 10% of all registered adult readers who used the Dar es Salaam Pilot Library. The kind of questions asked are shown in Appendix I.

Reading habits of adults

Statistics regarding adult readers were split up into three main groups. Group A analysed readers according to age, sex, race, occupation, language (whether mother tongue or not) and education). Group B of the statistics tried to find out from readers:

(a) the purpose for which they visited the library,
(b) how they found the books in the library,
(c) why they read books,
(d) whether or not they found an adequate number of books in the library to interest them, and
(e) their subject interests.

Group C of the statistics grouped readers according to where they lived.

Findings

Group A.

Division according to age:

46% of the readers were between ages 25 to 44 followed by those between ages 18 to 24, who formed 35% of the whole lot. Those under 18 years of age and 45 years and over comprised 32% and 29% respectively. Most of the European and Asian readers (70% and 51% respectively) were between the ages 25 to 44 while 62% of the African readers were between 18 and 24 years.

Division according to sex.

By far the largest number of readers were males, grouped racially as follows: African: 92% male 8% female; and Asians: 66% male 34% female. However of the European readers 54% were female and 46% male.

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Division according to racial background.

Among the readers who completed the questionnaire 42% were Asians, 30% Europeans and 28% African.

Division according to occupation.

Occupations were classified into unskilled (manual etc.), skilled (artisan, craftsman, etc.), semi-professional (clerical, etc.) and professional (executive rank, etc.). A high proportion of the readers were drawn from professional and semi-professional classes with a very small number coming from unskilled and manual workers. The largest number was made up of full time students, mostly Asians, followed by that of housewives, mostly Europeans. There was no African housewife.

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Division according to mother tongue

Most of the readers were English speaking followed by an almost equal number of Gujerati and Swahili speaking people.

Division according to other languages.

Most of the readers read English and almost half the number read Swahili.

Division according to Education

The largest number of library users were those with secondary education up to Form IV. 56% of these were Africans, 42% Asians and only 3% Europeans. The next largest group was made up of University students or graduates with the following percentage breakdown: 60% European, 33% Asian and 7% African. Readers with Form V and VI were the next group with Europeans forming 32%, Asians 22% and Africans 16%. Readers with primary education formed a very small group.

As regards further education, a large number of readers were pursuing correspondence courses, followed by that of Technical College students and adult education classes in that order.

Group B

Division according to purpose of visiting the library.

292 of the readers visited the library to borrow books, 89 used books for reference only, 59 read newspapers, 52 read magazines and 41 read books in the library. Only 26 studied their own books in the library.

45% of the African readers borrowed books, 13% read books in the library, 13% read magazines, 13% read newspapers, 11% used books for reference and 5% studied their own books.

Of the Asian readers, 45% borrowed books, 20% used books for reference, 12% read newspapers, 9% read magazines, 7% read books in the library and 7% studied their own books.

In contrast to the African and Asian readers 75% of the European readers borrowed books, 14% used books for reference, only 5% read magazines or newspapers and a negligible amount read the books in the library or studied their own books.

Division according to how readers found books they wanted.

The largest number of readers went straight to the shelves, many consulted the catalogues first and almost an equal number asked the library staff for help.

56% of Africans looked on shelves, 23% asked library staff for help, 12% looked in catalogues, 5% asked friends for help, 4% did not reply to the question.

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60% of the Asian readers looked on shelves, 21% looked in the catalogues, 11% asked library staff for help, 6% asked friends for help, 2% did not reply.

Of the European readers, 66% looked on the shelves, 22% looked in the catalogues, 10% asked library staff for help, 1% asked friends for help and 1% did not reply.

6/.....

Division according to why readers read books.
Most readers read books for pleasure. The next largest number of readers pursued private studies, followed by those who read books in connection with their work. A small group read books related to school work.

35% of African readers read to help themselves with private studies, 23% for pleasure, 23% in connection with their work and 13% in relation to school work, and 5% read for other reasons. 1% did not reply.

48% of the Asian readers read for pleasure, 18% for private studies, 16% in connection with their work, 14% in relation to school work, 3% for other reasons, 1% did not reply.

79% of the European readers read for pleasure, 10% in connection with their work, 5% for private studies, 1% in relation to school work, 4% for other reasons and 1% did not reply.

Division according to whether or not readers found an adequate number of books of interest to them.
Most readers indicated that usually they found an adequate number of books, many said that sometimes they found an adequate number of books, while almost an equal number said that they always found an adequate number of books. A small number of readers said that they rarely found an adequate number of books they wanted.

Group C

Most readers indicated that they lived in the central area of Dar es Salaam, Upanga, Oyster Bay, Kariakoo and Magomeni.

The 1969 survey

In 1969 another survey was conducted to find what kinds of books readers were interested in. Unlike in 1966, when the Pilot Library was in an unsuitable, old building, the new Central Library had moved into new, very magnificent purpose-built accommodation.

The survey was intended to find out what books on various subjects were borrowed by Africans, Asians and Europeans. A one-day subject by subject count of books available on the shelves of the adult lending library was carried out. The subject breakdown was based on the Dewey Decimal Classification as shown in Appendix II. The findings were expected to reveal subject areas of heavy demand and to show any examples of stock imbalance which

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A. Reading interests of adults

Non-fiction books

Of the total Adult Lending bookstock of 23,210 non-fiction, 4,083 were borrowed and 19,127 were on the shelves. Thus 17.6% of the books were on loan.

A racial analysis of books on issue indicated the following percentage of readers: Africans 56%; Asians 28%; Europeans 14% and 2% non known.

It is important to note that unlike in 1966, the African readership had increased remarkably and that of Europeans had declined. The African readership was twice that of Asians and four times that of Europeans.

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A statistical subject analysis of the books borrowed by Africans, Asians and Europeans is indicated in Appendix III. It is interesting to note that most of the books on loan were on languages (400), followed by those on philosophy (100), natural sciences (500) and applied sciences (600). The least popular books were on literature (800), history, geography and biographies (900) and religion (200).

Swahili books

50% of the Swahili books were borrowed. However, it should be borne in mind that there are comparatively very few Swahili titles available in the market - only about 500 titles in all. Many readers of Swahili books have indicated that the published material is too simple and elementary. The popularity of such titles as Uhuru na Umoja by President Nyerere and Mkiki Mkiki wa Siasa Tanzania by Barongo would appear to support the fact that people are interested in reading more advanced Swahili books.

Fiction

A count of fiction books borrowed indicated that 45% were borrowed by Europeans, 33% by Asians, and 21% by Africans. 1% of the readers was not known.

While reading the statistics it is important to remember that according to the 1967 census 269,588 people lived in Dar es Salaam, among them 88,462 were males and 42,314 females who could read and write. 59,592 males and 78,337 females could not read and write. At present there are over 275,000 people living in Dar es Salaam and by March 1971, 13,353 were registered members of the National Central Library, compared with 10,339 in March 1970.

CONCLUSION

What do all the statistics mean? The reader surveys for adults appear to confirm findings which have already been made in Ghana.

Mr. R.C. Benge, a well known British librarian, in his study of reading habits in Ghana appears to have confirmed the widely held notion that most Africans tend to read for utilitarian purposes and not for recreation or self-development. A very small number, if any, read imaginative literature. He found, for example, that practical manuals and textbooks which provided technical knowledge and new skills were the main essential reading matter. He observed that some African library assistants were not impressed by the European ladies who read mainly novels and biographies. They concluded that they could afford to read such books because in the absence of household chores there was nothing

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Very few novels were read by Africans because they were in English, a foreign language, and the ones which were read had many words underlined by readers who undoubtedly were interested in improving their English.

Spare time reading for most Africans was impossible partly because of lack of privacy on account of the "extended families" and partly because of household labours which they were expected to perform. A tropical climate seemed also to be one of the discouraging factors.

The African social factors just outlined require that libraries for Africans should have large reading rooms for study purposes. Mr. Benge recalls that in the West Indies many young people studied for their examinations at night by reading at the foot of the public lamp posts.

The reading pattern of Africans is also very much influenced by the fact that most of the books have subject matter which is alien and which reflects a European civilization. The popularity of novels by African writers such as "Things fall apart" by Achebe and "The African" by Conton, to mention only a few of them, in West and East Africa indicates that Africans are interested in reading books dealing with the social and cultural background of Africa.

These few observations suggest that more and more research should be conducted to find out who reads what and why. Only by doing so can librarians and adult educators provide the right reading material for the right people.

E.E. Kaungamno,
Ag. Director of Library Services.

Dar es Salaam
20th April, 1971.

References

1. Hockey, S.W. Development of Library Services in East Africa: a report submitted to the Governments of East Africa. December 1960 (1964).

2. The Tanganyika Library Services Board Act No.39 of 1963

3. Cunningham, G. On books, libraries and development. Supplement to Someni No. 8 1970. The Tanzania Library Association: Papers

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4. Gardner, F.M. Survey and assessment of the Delhi Public Library: Study Paper for the guidance of the Investigating team, UNESCO, March 1955.

5. Benge, R.C. Some notes on reading in Ghana. The Library World Vol. LXIV No. 752 February 1963.

Appendix I.

TANGANYIKA LIBRARY SERVICE
P.O. BOX 9283,
Dar es Salaam.
Telephone Dsm. 26121/2

SURVEY OF LIBRARY READERS

Dear Reader,

We ask your co-operation in completing this questionnaire. The results, which will be treated as confidential, will be used to assist the staff in book selection, in planning the layout of the new library for Dar es Salaam, and in their efforts to give you the best possible service.

Yours sincerely,

DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Please answer each question by placing an 'X' in the appropriate space.

Section A.

Question No. 1 Age of Reader

_____ (a) Under 18
_____ (b) 18 to 24
_____ (c) 25 to 44
_____ (d) 45 and over

Question 2. Sex

_____ (a) male
_____ (b) female

Question 3 Racial Background

_____ (a) African
_____ (b) Asian
_____ (c) European
_____ (d) other, (please specify
_____

Question 4 Occupation

_____ (a) unemployed
_____ (b) housewife
_____ (c) full-time student
_____ (d) other (please specify)
_____

Question 5 Mother Tongue

_____ (a) Swahili

Question 6 Other languages frequently read

_____ (a) Swahili

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Please answer each question by placing an 'X' in the appropriate space.

Section A.

Question No. 1 Age of Reader

- (a) Under 18
- (b) 18 to 24
- (c) 25 to 44
- (d) 45 and over

Question 2. Sex

- (a) male
- (b) female

Question 3 Racial Background

- (a) African
- (b) Asian
- (c) European
- (d) other, (please specify)

Question 4 Occupation

- (a) unemployed
- (b) housewife
- (c) full-time student
- (d) other (please specify)

Question 5 Mother Tongue

- (a) Swahili
- (b) Gujerati
- (c) English
- (d) French
- (e) other (please specify)

Question 6 Other languages frequently read

- (a) Swahili
- (b) Gujerati
- (c) English
- (d) French
- (e) other (please specify)

Question 7 Education

- (a) Primary only
- (b) Secondary up to Form IV
- (c) Sec. Form V to VI
- (d) University or equivalent

Question 8 Further Education

- (a) Technical college
- (b) Adult education classes
- (c) Correspondence courses
- (d) other (please specify

Please answer each question by placing an 'X' in the appropriate space.

Section B

Question 1 Do you visit the Library to:

_____ (a) borrow books

_____ (b) read books in the library

_____ (c) use books for reference

_____ (d) study your own books.

_____ (e) read newspapers

_____ (f) read magazines

Question 2. How do you find the books you want

_____ (a) look on the shelves

_____ (b) ask the library staff for help

_____ (c) ask a friend for hlep

_____ (d) look in the catalogue

Question 3 Do you read books

_____ (a) to help you in school work

_____ (b) to help you with private studies

_____ (c) to help you with your work.

_____ (d) for pleasure

_____ (e) for other reasons please specify

_____

Question 4 Can you find an adequate number of books in the library to interest you.

_____ (a) always

_____ (b) usually

_____ (c) sometimes

_____ (d) rarely

Section C

In what part of Dar es Salaam do you live?

_____ (a) Central area

_____ (b) Buguruni

_____ (j) Mgulani

_____ (k) Msimbazi

Please answer each question by placing an 'X' in the appropriate space.

Section B

Question 1 Do you visit the Library to:

_____ (a) borrow books
_____ (b) read books in the library
_____ (c) use books for reference
_____ (d) study your own books.
_____ (e) read newspapers
_____ (f) read magazines

Question 2. How do you find the books you want

_____ (a) look on the shelves
_____ (b) ask the library staff for help
_____ (c) ask a friend for hlep
_____ (d) look in the catalogue

Question 3 Do you read books

_____ (a) to help you in school work
_____ (b) to help you with private studies
_____ (c) to help you with your work.
_____ (d) for pleasure
_____ (e) for other reasons please specify

_____

Question 4 Can you find an adequate number of books in the library to interest you.

_____ (a) always
_____ (b) usually
_____ (c) sometimes
_____ (d) rarely

Section C

In what part of Dar es Salaam do you live?

_____ (a) Central area
_____ (b) Buguruni
_____ (c) Chang'ombe
_____ (d) Ilala
_____ (e) Kariakoo
_____ (f) Keko
_____ (g) Kinondoni
_____ (h) Kurasini
_____ (i) Magomeni
_____ (j) Mgulani
_____ (k) Msimbazi
_____ (l) Mtoni
_____ (m) Ocean Road
_____ (n) Oyster Bay
_____ (o) Regent Estate
_____ (p) Temeke
_____ (q) Upanga
_____ (r) Other (please specify)

_____

Appendix II

THE TANGANYIKA LIBRARY SERVICE

The Dewey Decimal Classification System

000 General Works
010 Bibliography
020 Library science
030 General encyclopedias
040 General collected essays
050 General periodicals
060 General societies, museums
070 Journalism, newspapers
080 Polygraphy, general collections
090 Rare books
100 Philosophy
110 Metaphysics
120 Special metaphysical topics
130 Mind and body
140 Philosophical systems
150 Psychology
160 Logic
170 Ethics
180 Ancient and medieval philosophy
190 Modern philosophy
200 Religion
210 Natural theology
220 Bible
230 Doctrinal theology
240 Devotional literature
250 Homiletics
260 The church
270 Church history
280 Denominations
290 Non-Christian religions
300 Social sciences
310 Statistics
320 Political science
330 Economics
340 Law
350 Administration
360 Associations and institutions
370 Education
500 Pure science (natural sciences)
510 Mathematics
520 Astronomy
530 Physics
540 Chemistry
550 Geology
560 Paleontology
570 Biology, anthropology
580 Botany
590 Zoology
600 Useful arts (applied sciences)
610 Medicine
620 Engineering
630 Agriculture
640 Home economics
650 Communication, business
660 Chemical technology
670 Manufactures
680 Trades
690 Building
700 Fine arts, amusements
710 Landscape gardening
720 Architecture
730 Sculpture
740 Drawing, decoration, design
750 Painting
760 Engraving
770 Photography
780 Music
790 Amusements
800 Literature
810 American
820 English
830 German
840 French
850 Italian
860 Spanish, Portuguese
870 Latin
880 Greek
890 Other literatures
900 History
910 Geography, description and travel

THE TANGANYIKA LIBRARY SERVICE

The Dewey Decimal Classification System

000 General Works
010 Bibliography
020 Library science
030 General encyclopedias
040 General collected essays
050 General periodicals
060 General societies, museums
070 Journalism, newspapers
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120 Special metaphysical topics
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140 Philosophical systems
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170 Ethics
180 Ancient and medieval philosophy
190 Modern philosophy
200 Religion
210 Natural theology
220 Bible
230 Doctrinal theology
240 Devotional literature
250 Homiletics
260 The church
270 Church history
280 Denominations
290 Non-Christian religions
300 Social sciences
310 Statistics
320 Political science
330 Economics
340 Law
350 Administration
360 Associations and institutions
370 Education
380 Commerce, communication
390 Manners and customs
400 Philology (languages)
410 Comparative philology
420 English
430 German
440 French
450 Italian
460 Spanish, Portuguese
470 Latin
480 Greek
490 Other languages
500 Pure science (natural sciences)
510 Mathematics
520 Astronomy
530 Physics
540 Chemistry
550 Geology
560 Paleontology
570 Biology, anthropology
580 Botany
590 Zoology
600 Useful arts (applied sciences)
610 Medicine
620 Engineering
630 Agriculture
640 Home economics
650 Communication, business
660 Chemical technology
670 Manufactures
680 Trades
690 Building
700 Fine arts, amusements
710 Landscape gardening
720 Architecture
730 Sculpture
740 Drawing, decoration, design
750 Painting
760 Engraving
770 Photography
780 Music
790 Amusements
800 Literature
810 American
820 English
830 German
840 French
850 Italian
860 Spanish, Portuguese
870 Latin
880 Greek
890 Other literatures
900 History
910 Geography, description and travel
920 Biography
930 Ancient history
940 Europe
950 Asia
960 Africa
970 North America
980 South America
990 Oceania and the polar regions.

Appendix III

THE TANGANYIKA LIBRARY SERVICE

Statistical subject analysis of the books borrowed

	African	Asian	European	Not known	Total on loan	Total on Shelves	Percentage on loan
General Works	114	10	4	2	130	994	11.5
Philosophy	95	46	14	2	157	394	28
Religion	37	26	17	-	80	830	9
Social Sciences	553	126	80	5	764	3,822	16
Languages	258	109	14	4	385	557	41
Natural Sciences	342	222	59	3	626	1,603	28
Applied Sciences	574	288	96	13	971	2,450	28
Fine Arts	93	132	109	4	338	1,861	15
Literature	46	35	25	1	107	1,751	5
History, Geography and Biography	193	154	172	6	525	4,865	9